

The makeup dilemma by Kikinu

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Summary:

When Eleven starts putting makeup on them, Mike is a little weirded out but doesn't consider it a problem. What he *does* consider a problem is that he starts finding *Will* pretty with makeup. And maybe without makeup too.

He's screwed.

The makeup dilemma

Author's Note:

Thanks to the amazing [PhoenixGFawkes](#) for being the first to read it and help me with my English, and also to Mamá [TerryMoon](#) for being my beta. Las quiero, peras.

The problem is not that Eleven likes makeup. Mike guesses that's ok, because she's a girl and girls are supposed to like makeup, right? Nancy likes makeup, his mom likes makeup, even Joyce likes makeup. So that's normal. Besides, he showed her how to use makeup first, so it's not as though he is opposed to Eleven liking it.

She looks nice wearing it, that's a plus.

The problem is not that Eleven likes putting makeup on *them* either. True, he was a little weirded out the first time she took one of his hands and started painting his nails a shiny red color, but even if he doesn't harbor romantic feelings for Eleven anymore, he has a soft spot for her and he can't tell her no.

Lucas, on the other hand, threw a tantrum so big that made Nancy come down to the basement to see what was happening.

"If you paint your nails black, people are going to think you are hardcore," Nancy affirmed and just then Lucas let Eleven near his nails.

The truth is *everyone* has a soft spot for Eleven, even Lucas. Maybe *especially* Lucas, after realizing how much of an asshole he was to her at the beginning.

After a couple of weeks of painting their nails, Eleven started with their faces and then Mike was a little more reluctant, but she never put weird colors on them, just countered their faces. Truth be told, he was a little happy that some of his imperfections were well hidden beneath the makeup that Eleven put on him. Mike is a shallow teenager, after all, and being sixteen really messes with your face.

So, yes, the problem is not exactly that Eleven likes using makeup on them. What's the problem, then? Well...

"You are pretty," Eleven tells Will, nodding with approval.

"Boys are not pretty, El, they're handsome," explains Lucas, suddenly too tall after going through a growth spurt last summer.

"I think he looks pretty," repeats Eleven, frowning.

"I don't have a problem with being pretty."

"No, Will, this time I have to agree with Lucas, I think boys are supposed to look handsome, not pretty," says Dustin.

"See? Dustin agrees with me. I'm right. Right, Mike?"

Suddenly his four friends are looking at him and Mike feels himself blush. And there's the issue. Because the problem is not that Eleven likes makeup or putting makeup on them. No.

The problem is that Mike thinks Will looks pretty with makeup.

Everyone is looking at him and all of them are wearing makeup of some sort, but the only thing Mike can see is how long Will eyelashes are, how nice his lips look with that soft pink color, how perfect his skin looks right now. He looks *really* pretty.

"Ah, uh. Will says he doesn't have a problem with being pretty and Eleven says she thinks he looks pretty, so..."

"I don't know why you even ask him," interjects Dustin, "he always does what Will or Eleven want. *Especially* if they both want the same thing."

"That's not true!" yells Mike, knowing that, in fact, is completely true.

Will giggles and Eleven smiles, while Lucas looks at him in disapproval. Dustin pats Mike on the back a few times.

"It's ok, we love you even if you are weak against them."

“Gosh, you are all terrible friends!”

He knows he is blushing and that this situation can only end in disaster, so he opts for distracting them with his new copy of *Return of the Jedi*. Eleven hasn't watched that one yet, because it was in theaters before she... well, before all the weird shit ended and she was able to live a semi normal life, so she is pretty excited to finally be able to watch it.

The five of them prepare for a Star Wars marathon and if every once in a couple of minutes Mike looks at Will... well, everyone has their eyes glued to the screen, so nobody will be the wiser.

After a while, he starts to accept the fact that Will looks pretty with makeup. It makes him look more androgynous, so maybe in some sort of way seeing Will with makeup reminds Mike of a girl, so it's not that weird, right? El also looks kind of androgynous, so it makes sense.

But, of course, Mike soon realizes he has a bigger problem. Because he doesn't find Will pretty only when he's using makeup, no. He starts to find him pretty *without* makeup too.

Then Mike really freaks out.

“Mike,” calls Eleven, frowning at him, “stop pacing.”

“I'm not pacing,” he denies, pacing around El's room. The girl just looks at him with a blank expression, making him finally stop. “Ok, sorry.”

El nods, returning her attention to the Super Mario Bros. game she's playing on her NES. Mike tries to watch her play, but after a couple of minutes he returns to his pacing.

“Mike.”

“I'm sorry, ok?!”

They look at each other in silence, Eleven waiting, Mike agitated. Finally, El nods, patting the spot next to her in the bed. Mike sighs, sitting down.

“It’s just... I have a problem,” he admits, looking at the floor.

“Troy?” El’s voice sounds dangerous and Mike would be a little scared if he didn’t know Eleven would never hurt someone unless it was to protect someone else.

“No. He doesn’t bother us anymore since Chief took you in and you started going to school with us. You are like our own superpowered bodyguard.” Eleven nods in approval and Mike is happy for her, then he remembers his problem and goes back to looking dejectedly at the floor. “It’s Will.”

There’s a moment of silence in which Mike is sure that the people on the other side of the town can hear his heartbeat. When Eleven doesn’t say anything, Mike finally looks at her. She looks deeply confused.

“Will...? Will is... bullying you?” she asks him, as if it were the most absurd thing in the world. Maybe because *it is* completely ridiculous.

“What? No! What are you talking about?”

“You said you have a problem with Will,” she accuses him.

“That doesn’t mean he’s bullying me!”

“Mike. Don’t yell,” she reprimands him. Mike pouts, because he may be sixteen but that doesn’t mean he has to stop acting like a child. El smiles before continuing, “Then what’s the problem?”

“I...,” he starts, then stops due to his anxiousness. He takes a deep breath, remembers he’s talking with the non-judgemental Eleven, and continues, “I find Will pretty. With *and* without makeup.”

He doesn’t know exactly what he was expecting, but it wasn’t Eleven to keep looking at him as though still waiting for the big revelation to happen. As if Mike hadn’t just dropped the biggest bomb of his life on her.

“That’s... it?”

“Yes, El!”

“I also think Will is pretty. Are you jealous? You shouldn’t, you are good looking too.”

“What? No, I’m not jealous! Don’t you get it, El? *I* think *Will* is pretty.”

Eleven seems to have a problem grasping what the issue actually is and Mike is pretty sure his brain is going to explode. Finally, Eleven nods in understanding and Mike sighs.

“I get it now. Don’t worry, Mike. I don’t care if you like Will. We’re friends now and it’s not going to be awkward between you and me. I think you two would look cute.”

Now Mike is sure his brain is going to explode. He can imagine the doctors telling his parents he died from a brain explosion. His mother is going to be shocked because he never told her his brain could do that and his father is going to be worried about missing the *Wheel of Fortune* for being occupied recognising his body.

“I don’t like Will! And we would *not* look cute together! And yes, I know I’m yelling!”

“Mike. Relax.”

He groans and buries his head in his hands. After a couple of seconds, El pats him on the back, which reminds him of Dustin a couple of weeks ago. Gosh, he is getting really pathetic.

“Explain it to me?” she asks him.

“Boys... boys are not supposed to find other boys pretty. Much less *like* them. It’s the same with girls, they’re not supposed to like other girls. But I think they can think other girls are pretty? It’s different for them. But, yeah, boys have to like girls, and girls have to like boys, otherwise you’re a queer and that’s... that’s not what people want.”

“You think it’s wrong that a boy likes another boy?”

“I... no, not really. It’s just... I think it’s the same if you like boys or girls. Did you know that one of Nancy’s college friends is gay? Gay means queer too. Well, she says he’s cool and that she doesn’t see what the problem is and that she went with him to some of those Pride Parades. Pride Parades are parades that queer people throw to support each other and to ask for respect. I think. I’m not sure,” he is kind of babbling now, but Eleven lets him talk, not making fun of him, letting him vent. “The thing is, she and mom started fighting because mom says she can’t talk of... of “those people” at the table, because they’re bad people and Holly and I are at an impressionable age and... you know my parents are not the best parents in the world but they *are* my parents and I can’t...”

He chokes on a sob and suddenly everything is too real and, *God*, this can’t be happening to him. Eleven hugs him tight and Mike rests his head in his shoulder, trying really hard not to cry.

“It doesn’t matter if I think it’s wrong or not,” he croaks, sniffing, “people are going to hate me. What if my parents don’t care for me anymore? What if Lucas and Dustin think I’m disgusting? What if *Will* doesn’t want to see me anymore? What if he hates me?”

Eleven caresses his hair and Mike sobs pathetically on her shoulder. He feels twelve again, crying because one of his best friends is possibly dead.

“Lucas and Dustin won’t find you disgusting. You’re their best friend, they love you. We all love you, Mike. And Will loves you a lot, too. He could never hate you. And your parents... it’s not as if they’re there for you at the moment,” she points out and that’s terrible and harsh but also true. “And you will always have Nancy. She said she doesn’t think there’s something wrong with boys that like boys, right?”

“Right,” he concedes.

“And maybe you should tell Will...”

Mike jumps out of the bed, drying his face with his arm and looking

horrified at Eleven.

“What? No! Are you insane? Didn’t you hear what I just told you?” he shouts.

“Mike, how long have you been liking Will? Be honest with me. Friends don’t lie to each other.”

“I don’t know. Since you started putting makeup on us...? Maybe... maybe before? I...,” he doesn’t know what to say. He just knows that he started noticing how pretty Will really is a few months ago, but if he has to be completely honest with himself and El..., “I think for a long a time. Even before I realized how pretty he is.”

El gives him a comforting smile and nods.

“Will is not going to hate you, I promise. And you obviously can’t stop thinking about this, so maybe what you need is to get it off your chest.”

“I don’t know. Damn it, I don’t know anything anymore. I just... El, I already lost Will one time, I can’t lose him again.”

Eleven opens her arms and Mike goes to hug her.

“I’m not saying things are not going to be awkward in the beginning if he doesn’t like you back. But think about Will, our Will, the Will you like. Would he hate you for liking him?”

Mike sighs, tightening his embrace, “No, he wouldn’t.”

“Exactly. I’m not saying that you should go to his house right now and tell him, either. Take your time. Calm down.”

“Ok. El?”

“Yes?”

“I think this is the longer you have talked since I know you.”

Eleven let’s him go and punches him in the arm.

“Mouthbreather,” she accuses him, making them both laugh.

Even if he’s not in love with her anymore, he’s always going to love her a lot.

A couple of months go by and yes, Mike is now sure that he is totally and utterly in love with one of his best friends. He’s not thrilled about this, but he’s not horrified either.

In a rush of fraternal love, he confessed to Nancy that he likes boys last month. She was visiting from college and was really cool about it. She promised not to tell their parents and that no matter what, she would be there for him always.

“I can’t believe I let mom say all those horrible things about gay people,” Nancy lamented, driving them to the ice cream shop.

“It’s ok, you were amazing anyway. Besides, I don’t know if I’m really gay? I still like girls. It’s just... I also like Will. Do you think that can happen?”

“Carl, my friend Jimmy’s boyfriend, likes both boys and girls. And Angela, a girl in my American History class, also like boys and girls. And also...” she stopped then, as if remembering something, then continued, “also two other guys I know like boys and girls too. Maybe you like both, maybe you like girls *and* Will, maybe you just like boys but still haven’t realized it yet. You can be confused, you know? You don’t need to be 100% sure of anything yet. Or ever. For the time being you like Will and that’s what matters.”

It was a recomforting talk, to be honest. After all the weirdness of the Demogorgon, Nancy and him reconnected, something he is now happy about. He doesn’t know what he would do without Nancy. Or Eleven. The women in his life are really amazing.

... well, maybe not his mom, but you can’t have all what you want.

“Have you seen my beard?,” Dustin asks him, bringing him back to reality.

“Isn’t it in your bag?”

“I already checked there. Man, I can’t be Gandalf without the beard! My costume is ruined!”

“Check below my bed!,” shouts Will from the bathroom, where Eleven is doing his makeup.

They’re all at the Byers’ house, getting ready for the Halloween party Jennifer Hayes is throwing. The only reason they’re invited is because she’s had an enormous crush on Will since he “came back from the dead”. Otherwise, she usually thinks they’re all a bunch of weirdos. He doesn’t like Jennifer Hayes, but everybody wanted to go and he’s not going to be a buzzkill.

Lucas is already ready, with an amazing Rambo costume. El even made some bruises on his face and arms with makeup that look so realistic she should consider working for Hollywood.

“I found it!”

“Was it under my bed?!”

“Yes! Thanks, man!”

Dustin puts on his beard and truly looks like Gandalf. Will made him a staff with some sticks and paper mache and it looks amazing. Will should also consider working for Hollywood. He and Eleven could work together there and Mike could go too and find a job as a screenwriter. He’s getting really good at making campaigns, how different can it be from writing a story? They would make an amazing team and...

“You there, Captain?,” asks Lucas, waving his hand in front of his face.

“Sure, just thinking of career options.”

“... what.”

“Nothing, nevermind.”

He's going as Kirk, which is kind of an easy costume, but he really likes how it looks. Eleven, on the other hand, is going as Chewbacca. Her first option was Leia, but she changed her mind in the last second and Chief had to drive her to the city to rent a pretty decent Chewbacca costume.

Will is going as Will the Wise, his Dungeons and Dragons character. They haven't seen his costume yet, because he wanted it to be a surprise. Once El ends with the makeup session Will is going to show them how he looks.

"He's ready," announces Eleven, entering the room. She is still in her normal clothes because she was afraid of dirtying the costume with makeup, but she told them she would be changing once they're ready to go.

"Ta-dah!"

Mike is pretty sure he just swallowed his tongue, because Will looks... *stunning*. He has dark boots with black pants and a blue robe tightened around his upper body. A silver moon necklace hangs around his neck and a black wizard hat is on top of his head. As for his face, El really got creative with him.

He has blue eyeshadow, with some silver thingy around his eyes. He also has eyeliner and glitter and his lips are a soft pink and he looks so pretty overall that Mike thinks he's going to cry again.

"Wow, Will! You look cool!," congratulates Lucas, giving him a high five.

"Thanks! El wanted to put blue lipstick on me, but I thought it was too much."

"Good call," observes Dustin.

"Bad call," corrects El. "But it's his face."

"What do you think?," Will asks Mike, and he's sure he's blushing again.

"Uh, you look nice. I mean, cool. Great. Cool."

Lucas gives him a weird face, which is completely justified because he's babbling.

"Are we ready to go?," he asks, hoping to distract everyone, which thankfully works.

The party is boring.

There're too many teenagers, many of whom usually bother Mike and his friends. Almost everyone is pretty drunk too, including his friends, which doesn't help make this party any better. Jennifer hogged Will as soon as they arrived two hours ago and is currently dancing with him and possibly also trying to kiss him.

He wants to drink *anything* to make things feel a little better, but Chief would kill him if he discovers that he is driving under the influence. Especially while driving Eleven around. And Joyce will probably join him in for doing the same with Will. Who is laughing at something Jennifer said.

This party sucks.

"Miiiiike," slurs Eleven, giggling afterwards. Apparently, her supernatural powers don't include the ability to not get drunk.

"Hi, El."

"Mike, Michael. Mickey. Mickey Mouse!"

Lucas, sitting next to Mike, snorts, which makes Eleven giggle again, which makes Lucas start laughing. Mike can't help smiling. His friends might be drunk, but they're *his* drunks.

"Mickey, Mike, have you seen Dustin?," Eleven finally asks, leaning on Lucas to maintain her balance and not fall to the floor.

"He's making out with Caroline Jenkins," he informs her. "Which, by the way, you knew because you and Lucas set them up."

“Ooooh, you’re right!,” shouts Lucas, making some not-so-drunk people look at them. He then squints at the dance floor. “You think Will is going to kiss Jennifer? She has been hanging on him since forever, they could start going out.”

“I’m going to the bathroom. Don’t break anything.”

He doesn’t care that Lucas is looking at him weird again or that Eleven is trying to tell him something through her foggy and drunk mind. He just needs to not be in front of Jennifer and Will dancing together for just a minute.

When he enters the bathroom, Candace White is making out with Brendan Parker, getting the boy’s face all green with her witch makeup. On a sour mood, Mike thinks that Will is a prettier magician than her. Then he throws them out.

He washes his face and manages to count until one thousand and twelve before hearing a knock on the door. He’s ready to tell anyone to get lost, but when he opens it, Will is on the other side, looking relieved.

“Thank God. Can you get us out of here? Jenny is a really nice girl, but if I have to dance to one more song with her I’m going to go crazy and start throwing up maggots.”

“That’s not funny,” laughs Mike, getting out of the bathroom. “I thought you were having fun.”

“Sure, for the first ten minutes. As I said, Jenny is nice, but she’s not you. Or, uh, the rest of the gang.”

“Aww, you love us.”

“Shut up, Wheeler!,” Will giggles, punching him on the arm. “But, seriously, can we go? Eleven is levitating cushions and trying not to get caught, Lucas is giggling at nothing and I think Dustin is passed out on Caroline’s lap. And maybe this all could be more fun if I were drunk, but I couldn’t get close to a cup of *anything* all night.”

“That sounds like an *magnificent* plan. I just want this night to end.”

They gather all their friends together and make up some dumb excuse for Jennifer, who looks really sad for Will's departure. Mike can't help feeling a little guilty, because it's not Jennifer's fault that he's also crushing on Will.

They drop off Dustin and Lucas first at the Sinclair's house, making sure they don't kill themselves going up the stairs. Then they drop off Eleven, who fricking *levitates* to her room and Mike thanks God that she lives in a secluded area.

When they finally reach the Byers' house, Will looks nervous.

"Are you ok?," Mike asks, worried.

"I... yes. I mean. Would you stay with me for a while?" He blushes then, embarrassed. "Mom is working and I don't want to be alone."

It doesn't happen all the time anymore. Will used to be scared of being alone at his house after coming back from the Upside Down, but he has got better with time. It still happens, though, and Mike doesn't think Will should be ashamed of needing to be around people after all the hell he's been through.

"Of course, Will. All the time you need."

Will smiles at him and Mike really wants to kiss him. Or hug him. Or take his hand. Gosh, he's getting really pathetic.

It's half past midnight and Mike is kinda sleepy, but Joyce hasn't come back yet and he's not going to leave Will alone.

"I was really looking forward the party," Will admits, his costume still on.

"Why? Did you want to kiss Jennifer?"

Will rolls his eyes.

"No, knucklehead. I don't like Jenny like that. I wanted to dance with

you, Lucas, Dustin and Eleven. You're my friends, you're the ones I want to spend time with. But Jenny wanted to dance with me and *it was her party* and I didn't want to upset her."

Mike chuckles, earning a disapproving look from Will.

"You're too nice, Will."

Will buffs, "You're one to talk, you didn't even want to go to the party in the first place."

"That's... true. But I did want to dance with you."

"Oh."

They sit in silence in Will's bedroom for a while, until his friend nods to himself and gets up.

"What are you doing?"

"We're gonna dance," Will announces, putting a cassette in Jonathan old player. *Don't you (forget about me)* starts playing and Will reaches to him, grinning.

Mike smiles and takes his hand, and soon they're both dancing and laughing. Mike twirls Will, who giggles, looking so *happy* that Mike is sure his poor heart is going to melt.

"I have to tell you something," Mike tells Will at two in the morning.

They're in the kitchen making scrambled eggs because they were hungry and that was the first thing they found.

"Ok?"

"You are... you are really important to me, you know that, right? You are, like, one of my best friends. That's never going to change, you need to know that."

For some reason, Will suddenly looks really pale, making the blue

eyeshadow stand out more.

“O-ok.”

“I... you... I think you’re pretty!,” he stammers, feeling his face grow hot. “I mean... I... like you. As in... like you-like you. Like Jennifer Hayes likes you. Like I used to like Eleven. Like... you know. I *like* you.”

The truth is out there and Will looks at him with wide eyes and Mike is sure he’s going to be sick all over the Byers’ kitchen.

Oh, God, why did he said that? Why couldn’t he keep his mouth shut? He has ruined everything! He feels physically ill, and Will doesn’t say anything, just looks at him while his face goes from really pale to really red.

He wants to die.

“You... like me? Is that...?,” Will stops, closes his eyes, takes a deep breath and looks at him again, his eyes still really big and really beautiful. “I... I know you wouldn’t do it, but is this a joke? Are you making fun of me?”

“What? No. Why... why would I be making fun of you? I... I know that it must be weird for you that another guy is telling you that he finds you pretty and that he likes you. And... and I know you may be freaking out, but believe me, *I’m freaking out* and I want us to still be friends, and please don’t hate me, and why are you smiling? Please say something.”

Will is smiling fondly at him and Mike is freaking out.

“Gosh, Dustin is right. Sometimes your total obliviousness is mindblowing.”

“What?”

“*Mike*, I have liked you since we were like, eight. I thought you *knew* this. *Everybody* knows this. Even *Jenny* knows this. Why do you think everyone calls me a queer?”

"I. What? People are just... what?"

Will laughs and he sounds so happy again and he has just told Mike that he likes him back and that, apparently, everybody knew it and Mike...

"Oh," he says, feeling a smile breaking through his face.

"Yes, *oh*."

They stay like that, smiling at each other like two madmen, the scrambled eggs forgotten and untouched on their plates. Finally, Will starts laughing again.

"Can we kiss now?"

"Yes."

They kiss. And it's wonderful.

"Why do your lips taste like strawberry?," he finally asks Will at quarter past three in the morning. Joyce is supposed to come home in fifteen minutes, but they're still cuddling on the sofa, both sleepy but with enough energy to kiss every couple of minutes. Or seconds.

"Oh. It's El's chapstick. Is strawberry flavored."

Mike frowns, confused. "Didn't she put the chapstick on you like, seven hours ago? Shouldn't it had worn out?"

Wills looks a little embarrassed. "She gave it to me. I've been reapplying it every couple of hours. Do you think is weird?"

"Nah. I think makeup looks *great* on you. And it tastes nice," he assures, smiling.

"Great."

"Great."

They kiss a little more for good measure and Mike finds he has a new problem: he doesn't think he can stop kissing Will Byers. Luckily, he's pretty sure Will Byers can't stop kissing him either.

Author's Note:

Will is my baby and he deserves so much better. LET
MY BABY BOY BE HAPPY AND SAFE.

Come and scream about Stranger Things with my in
[my tumblr](#) :)